

Message Text

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FOR NEA AND EUR ONLY

E.O. 11652: NA
SUBJECT: CENTO FUNDING

REF: (A) STATE 211208, (B) STATE 212570, (C) ANKARA 4834

1. CENTO AGREEMENT CALLS UPON MEMBERS TO ASSIST IN DEFENSE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CENTO REGION. ALTHOUGH US IS "OBSERVER" IN CENTO, IT ACTIVELY SUPPORTS BOTH THESE OBJECTIVES, THE LATTER THROUGH THE US BLOCK GRANT. US REPRESENTATIVES TO MTCF WORKING PARTY AND TO ECONOMIC SUBCOMMITTEE, ECONOMIC STEERING GROUP AND ECONOMIC COMMITTEE MEETINGS, AND US-SECONDED OFFICERS IN KEY POSITIONS IN CENTO SECRETARIAT HAVE SOUGHT TO INFLUENCE CENTO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN LINES CONSISTENT WITH US FOREIGN ASSISTANCE OBJECTIVES, E.G., AID NEW DIRECTIONS.

2. AT THE URGING OF EXPERTS, US AND UK STAFF, THE CENTO ECONOMIC COMMITTEE APPROVED A SET OF PRIORITY ECONOMIC INTERESTS (AGRICULTURE, AGO-INDUSTRY, INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATIONS, MINERAL DEVELOPMENT AND RURAL HEALTH) LAST MARCH WHICH HAVE A POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE
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THE RELEVANCE OF CENTO'S ECONOMIC PROGRAMMING.

3. AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN INFLUENCING CENTO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES HAS BEEN THE ABILITY OF AID TO PROVIDE TOP-FLIGHT TECHNICAL EXPERTS WHO ARE ABLE TO DIRECT CENTO TOWARDS ACTIVITIES WHICH ADDRESS PROBLEMS CONSISTENT WITH NEW DIRECTIONS CRITERIA.

4. EMB HAS REVIEWED STATUS OF IMPLEMENTING THE NEW CRITERIA WITH CENTO DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (ECONOMIC), S. DOUGLAS MARTIN, CENTO ECONOMIC SECRETARY, JOHN DENNIS, AND CENTO SENIOR AGRICULTURAL ADVISOR (SAA), CLYDE S ADAMS, WHO IDENTIFIED SEVERAL ACTIVITIES WHICH REFLECT A BASIC SHIFT OF THE CENTO ECONOMIC PROGRAM:

A. PLANNED VISIT OF DR DONALD R TAVES, UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER MEDICAL SCHOOL, TO KURDISH AREAS OF EASTERN TURKEY AND NORTHWEST IRAN WILL ASSESS POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A DEFLOURIDATION PILOT PROJECT TO ADDRESS SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEM WHERE HIGH FLOURIDE LEVELS IN THE WATER LEAVES SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF THE POPULATION PERMANENTLY CRIPPLED. THE POPULATION IN THESE AREAS HAS BEEN NEGLECTED FOR GENERATIONS AND THE US PROVISION OF TA WOULD PROVIDE THE RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS WITH MEANS TO REACH THIS GROUP.

B. A SERIES OF THREE CENTO SEMINARS ON RURAL HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEMS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY COULD STRENGTHEN THE CAPABILITY OF CENTO REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS TO IMPROVE MEDICAL SERVICES TO POPULATION GROUPS CURRENTLY RECEIVING LITTLE OR NO HEALTH SERVICES;

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C. MTCF WORKING PARTY IS NOW IN PROCESS OF REDIRECTING THE CENTO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, AND BOTH THE US AND UK ARE STRESSING THE ADOPTION OF A MORE RELEVANT TRAINING PROGRAM AS OPPOSED TO ONE EMPHASIZING GENERAL SCHOLARSHIPS.

D. USE OF FUNDS FROM THE FY 1977 AID BLOCK GRANT HAS BEEN SPECIFICALLY EARMARKED FOR TRAINING CENTO STAFF IN AID PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING TECHNIQUES; AND,

E. ELIMINATION OF US FUNDING OF LIBRARY/BOOK PROGRAM, WHICH HAS HAD ONLY LIMITED EFFECTIVENESS, HAS RESULTED IN BETTER ALLOCATION OF THESE FUNDS FOR MORE PRACTICAL PROGRAMS.

5. SAA CLYDE ADAMS RECENTLY FORWARDED AID/W (PALMER AND RICHTER) HIS BAYAT TRIP REPORT WHICH DESCRIBES CENTO PROGRAMS IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR WHICH ARE SUPPORTIVE OF AID'S NEW DIRECTIONS. ADAMS NOW ON TRIP TO IRAN AND PAKISTAN TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL APPROACHES TO AGRICULTURE RESEARCH, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

5. IN THE PAST SOME OF CENTO'S PROGRAMS WERE CONSIDERED MARGINAL (REFTEL C), BUT THE ABOVE EXAMPLES ARE GOOD REASONS TO EXPECT THAT CENTO ECONOMIC PROGRAM CAN BE MOVED IN DIRECTIONS CONSISTENT WITH OUR OWN AID CRITERIA. US CANNOT EXPECT THE CENTO MEMBER COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT ALL OUR IDEAS, BUT AS LONG AS WE ARE ABLE TO PUT FORTH CONVINCING GROUNDS FOR OUR SUGGESTIONS, WE CAN EXPECT SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT IN CENTO ECONOMIC PROGRAM.

6. EMBASSY CONSIDERS THAT AID'S PARTICIPATION IN CENTO IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE EXPERTISE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN CENTO'S IMPETUS IN A DIRECTION WE SUPPORT. WHILE IO IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAPABLE OF MANAGING THE US BLOCK GRANT WE ARE CONCERNED THAT IO LACKS READY ACCESS TO BACKSTOPPING WE AND CENTO NEED TO INSTITUTIONALIZE AID NEW DIRECTION CONCEPTS.
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